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framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos, they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of funeral dirges.

But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

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lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

On the day that marks the climax of the *Golib* Festival, all the Talis and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Golib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

Bloodshed during *Golib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

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684 577 man does not even have sexual desire for a sister or a daughter. This is the standard, conscious, sexual attitude to a sister and it is in keeping with the conscious attitude about incest with a sister or daughter. Such an act is spoken of as tabooed (*kih*), but it is neither a crime nor a sin. It is simply despicable conduct that the culprits ought to be ashamed of as unworthy of grown persons. Even children talk of copulation with a sibling as something beneath contempt, though, in fact, it is common knowledge that up to the age of about 8 or 9 boys often try to have sexual intercourse with a small girl playmate in their play and for the most part playmates are close lineage siblings. Adults reprove the children if they discover them in this kind of play, but dismiss it as due to childish irresponsibility.[1] This, indeed, is the essence of the general attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter. It is disreputable, because it does not conform to the accepted standards of responsible adult conduct. Only in the case of incest with a full (*soog*) sister is there a feeling of horror. It is felt to be unlucky in a vague way. She is the person of the opposite sex with whom a man is most fully identified. What is more important, she perpetuates their mother's uterine line and therefore stands for the indestructibility of the unique bond between mother and child. Sexual intercourse with her would be almost like incest with one's own mother; and this feeling is extended to distant female uterine kin (*saarət*) as well.

Incest with a mother, a brother's wife, or a daughter-in-law is in a different class of reprehensible acts. It is a taboo for a man even to sit on the sleeping-mat of a woman related to him in any of these ways (and thus, we may presume, symbolically betraying a wish to seduce her). To have intercourse with her is a very grievous sin. It is utterly repugnant to Tale morality.

684 577 539 Incest with one's own mother the natives regard as a thing of such monstrous iniquity that it is ridiculous to conceive of anyone who is not mentally deranged committing it. Incest with a father's wife, other than one's own mother, or a brother's or son's wife is almost as heinous a sin and is regarded with little less horror; but it is known to happen sometimes. In one of the cases that occurred during my stay in Taleland, a man raped his father's elderly wife (his own dead mother's co-wife), whom he called '*ma-pit* (younger mother)'; in the other, a notoriously dissolute young man seduced his father's brother's wife, whom he would also describe as '*ma-pit*'. Both were publicly derided in the songs sung during the dances of the Great Festivals. One of the songs about the second man went as follows:

[626 533]

> Badiemaal (his name) you who rape vaginas, Oh!
> Bakyɛlbanɔya (the woman) is a slut.
> Zimbil-Badiemaal is a dog.

[1] Cf. my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, Memorandum XVII, International African Institute, 1938.

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pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognised. Members of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

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tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingaun incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingaun, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat